

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Remaining Claims

Seventeen (17) claims (Claims 1 – 8 and 10 – 18) remain pending in this application through this Amendment. Claims 1 and 18 have been amended herein. As explained in more detail below, Applicants have amended the claims to more clearly point out and distinctly claim the invention, and submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request such action.

Rejection of Claims 1 – 8 and 10 – 18 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph

Claims 1 – 8 and 10 – 18 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner points to the term “substantially” in Claims 1 and 18.

Claims 1 and 18 have been amended to remove this term, thereby rendering this rejection moot. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 1 – 5, 8, and 10 – 17 under 35 USC §102(e) - Tsuzuki, et al.

Claims 1 – 5, 8, and 10 – 17 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by US Patent No. 6,417,144 to *Tsuzuki, et al.*

Tsuzuki, et al. has a US filing date of June 13, 2001. The present application claims priority of 60/253,757, filed November 29, 2000. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn, as *Tsuzuki, et al.* is not properly cited as §102(e) art.

Rejection of Claims 6, 7, and 18 under 35 USC §103(a) - Tsuzuki, et al.

Claims 6, 7, and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious under US Patent No. 6,417,144 to *Tsuzuki, et al.* as applied above.

As discussed above, because *Tsuzuki, et al.* is not properly cited as §102(e) art, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing and in conclusion, Applicants submit that the 35 USC §§102, 103, and 112 rejections set-forth in the Office Action have been overcome, and that the pending claims are not indefinite, anticipated by, or obvious over the cited art, either individually or in combination. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal

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of the rejection(s) set-forth in the Office Action. Should the Examiner believe that a discussion with Applicants' representative would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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